Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the
Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.,
and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

Volume 1, No. 3 April, 1949

Call Churches To Study U. S. Responsibility

World Order Conference Meets In Cleveland

By Herman F. Reissig

Rebman

Some of the delegates representing the prospective United Church of Christ at the National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, which met at Cleveland.

"Amazing" is the word for what happened in Cleveland, Ohio, between the 8th and 11th of March, 1949. What was so amazing about it? After all, four hundred and fifty church leaders meeting through four days in an average American city seems like nothing especially breath-taking. But consider! The whole world watches in anxious suspense every move made on the international plane by two fantastically powerful nations, the United States and Russia. Those two nations are engaged in a cold war which—we hardly dare imagine it!—could become a hot war, pulling civilization down to ruin. In this situation, as complicated as it is dangerous, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America summons all the churches associated with it to send delegates to Cleveland, to see what wisdom they can produce for returning the world to sanity.

The delegates came—more than 450 of them, business men, housewives, teachers, lawyers, parish ministers, church officials. Through four days, from early morning until very late at night, these Christians thought about nothing save what the Church of Christ should say and do to lead the world away from the slippery slope to disaster. This writer calls the conference amazing for the following reasons.

FIRST. Through all the long discussions it never occurred to us to say, or even to remember, that we were members of this or that denomination. Except for some short denominational fellowship gatherings, sandwiched in between the official sessions, we were all there quite simply as followers of Christ. On the one side, the peril. Nothing denominational about that! On the other side, the God to whom we belong and the Christ whose name we bear. Nobody defended his ecclesiastical system. Nobody boasted his peculiar church traditions. Anything like that would have seemed as out of place as a defense of atheism. Literally! It may have happened before—this kind of all-out Christian unity. Still, it's amazing. Something to think about!

SECOND. Nobody asked, "What has the church to do with international relations?" Nobody even hinted that the church ought to "preach the Gospel" and leave international affairs to statesmen. We have come a long way in a few years. We seem to know that where people are concerned the church of Christ is concerned. If we could always think together like this and always be ready to put our Christian minds on anything important to people — economics, race, international affairs — Christianity might really put its mark on our civilization.

They Had Facts

THIRD. It was amazing to see the skill and the amount of accurate information which these churchmen brought to the discussion. One doubts if any "expert" anywhere would, at any point of the discussions have felt like saying that the churchmen did not know what they were talking about. Bring up the United Nations and any number could cite chapter and paragraph. Raise the question about Indonesia and some one quickly came to the platform with detailed information. Church leaders have been doing their home work! Words

**PROTESTANTISM HAS SPOKEN ON THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS!
WILL THE MEMBERS OF YOUR CHURCH KNOW ABOUT IT?
WILL THEY STUDY—AND ACT?**

REGIONAL PACTS

Regional pacts can add to the total of common security if they are genuinely within the universal framework of the United Nations; if they are based upon a natural community of interest and are in fact designed and operated to preserve and to promote the general welfare of participating nations. Such pacts can, on the other hand, add to insecurity if their words conceal what is essentially a military alliance which might validly appear to others to be aggressive.

—From the Cleveland Message.

like "naive, uninformed, superficial, unrealistic" don't apply. At least not in this field. The word is "responsible." The slang phrase is, "They know their stuff!"

FOURTH. The conference was an amazing demonstration of democracy at work. To be sure, these 450 church leaders are not quite a cross-section of the American people. There were white and colored, wealthy and far-from-wealthy, old and young, conservatives and liberals. No opinion was suppressed, no idea laughed out of court. No one used harsh names. (Particularly, praise be! no one was called "Red" or "reactionary.") Motion, substitute motion, amendment, amendment to the amendment, calls for "the previous question"—the parliamentary situation sometimes got fairly complicated. But neither great earnestness nor difference of opinion ever produced acrimony. Perhaps this is *Christian* democratic action. The months to come must judge if our conclusions were truly significant, Christian, and potent. All one can say now is that we thought hard, debated virogously, and—without the slightest pressure on anyone—adopted every final statement without dissent.

What good will the conference do? Not much—until you who read this get hold of the reports and discuss them in your church and put the recommendations into action in every way you can think of. It's our business now, yours and mine, to see to it that the results of all this hard and prayerful work get into the lifestream of the churches. I suspect that if that happens the dangerous trend of these days may be reversed.

* * * *

Note: This article, as well as those which describe the Post-Cleveland regional workshops and suggestions "For Your Church" were prepared for CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY by the Reverend Herman F. Reissig, International Relations Secretary of the Council for Social Action.

OUT INTO THE COUNTRY

This article describes one practical method of carrying the conclusions of the Cleveland Conference out into the country—to the cities and towns and local churches. Beginning in the middle of April, one-day "Workshops on World Order" are to be held in at least twenty cities—twenty this spring and, we hope, many more in the fall. Look at the end of the article to see if you live in or near one of the cities mentioned. If you do not, get in touch with your city or state council of churches and urge that a workshop be scheduled at the earliest possible date.

This is the plan: The workshops are being held under the auspices of local councils of churches in cooperation with the Federal Council and the denominational social action departments. The latter are sending invitations to all their churches in the area where a workshop is to be held. The goal is: the pastor and at least three lay people present from each church. The workshop begins at two in the afternoon and ends with an evening mass meeting. At least five denominational leaders will be present. One of them will give one of the afternoon addresses and all of them will act as resource leaders in the discussion groups. The mass meeting will be addressed by a well-known Christian leader. There will be a table of the best available literature on international problems.. Filmstrips will be shown. The best materials and technique available will be put at the disposal of those who come.

This is what we hope to accomplish: (1) To acquaint key church people with the conclusions of the Cleveland Conference — through brief addresses and discussion and through distributing the printed reports. (2) To stimulate study and action in the churches from which the workshop delegates come—by presenting an over-all picture of the international situation and by making available resource materials and practical suggestions on how to work for peace in the local church and in the local council of churches.

Workshop Schedule

Most of the workshops will run like this:

2:00 p. m. Address: "Issues of American Foreign Policy" by one of the national denominational leaders.
Address: "What the Churches Say About These Issues" by one of the area delegates to Cleveland.
Discussion and questions.

4:00 p. m. Sectional Meetings
1. Soviet-Western Tensions
2. The Churches and Revolution in the Far East
3. Strengthening the United Nations
Resource materials and methods will also be discussed in each section.

5:30 p. m. Denominational Meetings. Congregational Christians and Evangelical and Reformed will meet as a single group to discuss the denomination's program for world order.

6:15 p. m. Supper. Filmstrips. Plans of the Local Council of Churches. Fellowship.

8:00 p. m. Mass Meeting. Brief worship. One nationally-known speaker.

In addition to the delegates from local churches, city, state, and denominational social action chairmen will be invited. You will see that your church is represented, won't you? Talk to your minister about it. If he has not received an announcement, get in touch with Huber Klemme or Herman Reissig. The following workshops have been definitely scheduled:

April	19	Fargo, North Dakota
	20	Minneapolis, Minn.
	21	Duluth, Minn.
	22	Madison, Wisconsin
	23	Muskegon, Michigan
	25	Detroit, Michigan
	25	Springfield, Illinois
	26	St. Louis, Missouri
	27	Toledo, Ohio
	27	Jefferson City, Missouri
	28	Buffalo, New York
	29	Rochester, New York
	29	Dayton, Ohio
May	1	Albany, New York
	2	Baltimore, Maryland
	3	Syracuse, New York
	4	Erie, Pennsylvania
	11	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

For Your Church: From Cleveland

It is hard to imagine any church not wanting to get, as quickly as they are ready, the conclusions reached by the delegates to the Cleveland Study Conference. What materials will be available and how may they be used?

A. The official *Message*. This is a carefully-worded, concentrated digest of the thinking done at Cleveland. It will be ready soon in printed form. We hope that it will be read in full and commented on in every pulpit and that copies will be given to all church members. You may not agree with every sentence. You may feel that it falls short at this or that point. The fact remains: nearly five hundred Christian laymen and pastors, following hard and prayerful thinking, felt that this *Message* contains the best they could say on such issues as: The Christian Understanding of our Worldly Power, Responsibility in the Use of Power, Dangers of Worldly Power, Soviet-Western tensions, the situation in China, the proposed Atlantic Security Pact, the Special Task of the Churches.

B. The complete conference *Findings*. This will include the *Message* and the following conference reports:

1. A report on *Guiding Principles of the Churches for World Order*. This and the following reports were "received and recommended to the churches for their study."

2. A report on the *Churches and the United Nations*.

3. A report on the *Churches and American Policy in Europe*—with Particular Reference to the Soviet-Western Tensions.

4. A report on the *Churches and American Policy in the Far East*. A wonderfully helpful document on the situation in China and other Far Eastern countries.

5. A report on the *Churches' Strategy of World Order Education and Action*. Here are down-to-earth, practical suggestions on what to do in your community and your church.

We suggest that the Reports (Numbers 1-5) be used in social education and action meetings, adult classes, men's clubs, women's societies. They may also be used as a basis for a series of discussions at church-night meetings and forums. These reports should be ready after Easter and may be ordered from one of the following: The Commission on Christian Social Action, the Council for Social Action, your city or state Council of Churches, the Department of International Justice and Goodwill of the Federal Council of Churches.

Four Ways of Acting

1. If there is to be a World Order Workshop in your area, make sure that your church is represented by the pastor and three lay leaders. (See article, "Out Into the Country.")

2. If no Workshop is scheduled near enough for you to attend, get in touch with your state Council of Churches and urge that one be planned.

3. Let the minister and your social action committee (or other appropriate church committee or board) study the materials listed in the article, "For Your Church: From Cleveland," and then plan a church-wide program of study and action. Such a plan may include: sermons, lectures, small group meetings in the homes, church-night meetings, special forums, discussion series in young adult, men's and women's societies.

4. "Action now" need not mean a complete program between now and summer. The sooner, the better, but the *Message* and the *Reports* from Cleveland will be just as valid next fall as in the next two months. Each church will judge for itself what it will do. We plead only that you plan effectively and comprehensively to rally the power of your church for a return to sanity and for progress toward justice among the nations.

"Long on Principles—Short On Action"

That is a charge often levelled against our churches. The Cleveland Conference was perhaps the first large interdenominational conference in history which gave major attention to practical plans for putting principles into action. We had intended, in this issue of *CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY*, to set down some detailed suggestions for local world order programs. There is a better way. The Cleveland report on *The Church's Strategy for World Order Education and Action* is just what you are looking for. Order it and study it! Additional suggestions will be made in the workshops. The Commission on Christian Social Action and the Council for Social Action will be delighted to help you through correspondence.

FROM THE CLEVELAND MESSAGE

As Christians we believe that this nation holds its power under the providence of God, to whom all nations are subject. We reject all interpretations of our destiny which would ascribe it merely to historical accidents without moral or religious meaning. We equally reject all interpretations which would regard this power as chiefly the fruit of virtue. We seek that our nation shall resist both the temptation to use its power irresponsibly and the temptation to flee the responsibilities of its power.

* * * *

The corollary of power is responsibility. Power can corrupt. So, too, it can be made to serve worthy ends. Power can be used as an instrument of aggression. So, too, can it be used as an instrument of law and order. Power can be used exclusively for purposes of national self-interest. So, too, can it be used for the development and preservation of world community. Power is a trust for which we are accountable to God. The nation that ignores this truth courts disaster.

* * * *

There is no policy so barren, so certain to fail, as that of merely maintaining the STATUS QUO. If our nation's leadership is to be worthy, it must develop constructive and creative programs that will capture the imagination and enlist the support of the multitudes whose interest in battling political, economic and racial injustice is greater than their interest in defending such injustice merely because communism attacks it.

* * * *

A preventive war would be folly as well as sin. The just society is impregnable to communism, which, although it may lift some burdens, fastens upon the common people other burdens greater and more grievous to be borne. Our major attention should, accordingly, be directed to establishing justice within the condition of freedom throughout the earth.

* * * *

If America's leadership is to deserve the confidence of the world, it must be characterized by a righteous and dynamic faith. No people is ever great, even in worldly terms, without a faith, and nothing would be more dangerous than to have the present material power of our nation employed carelessly, detached from the guiding direction of a policy based upon righteous faith.

WASHINGTON OFFICE SECURES ASSISTANT

Information on government actions affecting our foreign policy as well as other phases of legislation, will be more fully and promptly available to our churches as a result of a step recently announced by the Council for Social Action. This is the appointment of Mrs. Rose Mae Catchings as Research Assistant to the Rev. Thomas B. Keehn in the Washington office of the Legislative Committee.

Mrs. Catchings

Mrs. Catchings grew up in Greensboro, North Carolina, where she attended Bennett College. After finishing college, where she majored in English and history, she undertook graduate study in social work at the Atlanta University School of Social Work and in religious education at Gammon Theological Seminary, also in Atlanta. Further studies were pursued at the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary in New York.

Her professional experience includes two years with the welfare department of North Carolina as chief welfare assistant, followed by two years as executive secretary of the Phyllis Wheatley Branch of the Y. W. C. A. in Lynchburg, Virginia. While there she was appointed to the national staff of the Young Women's Christian Association as National Student Secretary. In this capacity her special duties included administration and development of the Student Christian Movement program in the white and Negro colleges of the South.

Later she moved to Chicago and for a while served as girls' work secretary with the South Parkway Boulevard branch Y. W. C. A. For the last year she was employed by the Juvenile Court in Washington, D. C., as a probation officer, especially working with adults whose families in relationship to their children had been disrupted.

In 1944 she was married to the Reverend L. Maynard Catchings, presently pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, Washington, D. C. There is one child, Lincoln Maynard, junior, now three and one-half years of age.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

The following schools and institutes offer excellent opportunities for training in various phases of Christian social action. Inquiries as to scholarship aid should be directed to your own denominational office:

Midwest Regional School for Social Action, Camp Idhuhapi (near Minneapolis), Minnesota. Begins at 2 p. m., Monday, May 23, and closes at noon, Friday, May 27. Tuition, $20.

Workshop on the City Church, Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, noon, Monday, June 6 to noon, Friday, June 10. Seminars on City Church Strategy (Prof. Albert T. Rasmussen), Urban Social Forces (Rev. Gerson S. Engelmann), and Pastoral Ministry in the City (Rev. Harold Wilke). Registration, $20.00.

Summer School for Ministers on the Church and Economic Life, University of Chicago, June 27 to July 28. Enrollment limited to 40. Courses on Economics for Pastors, Religious Presuppositions for Economic Life, Dynamics of Community Living. Room and Board, $67.50, exclusive of Saturday night and Sunday meals.

Industrial Relations Institute for Church Leaders, School for Workers, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. July 10 to 24. Opening Sunday, July 10 at 7 p. m.; classes begin Monday, 7:45 a. m., closing session Friday, July 24. Cost, exclusive of Sunday meals, $70.

Eastern Regional School for Social Action, Deering, New Hampshire. Begins with luncheon, Monday, July 25; closes with luncheon, Saturday, July 30. Tuition, $20.

Race Relations Institute, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee, June 27 to July 9. Tuition, two weeks, $59.50; three weeks, $77.00.

ST. LOUIS HOLDS JOINT INSTITUTE

Sponsored by the Social action committees of Missouri Valley Synod and Missouri State Conference, a successful social action institute was held in St. Louis, February 11, 12, and 13. Activities started off on Friday night with a dinner in Pilgrim Congregational Church, attended by nearly 250 St. Louisans who heard Ray Gibbons, Francis McPeek, and Huber Klemme of the denominational social action staffs speak on "The Church and our Community."

On Saturday morning three section meetings went to work at the downtown Y. M. C. A., with the out-of-town leaders and local resource people tackling education, industrial relations, and housing. During the luncheon hour, Jefferson Rogers spoke on the church's community responsibility with special reference to race relations and the Brotherhood week emphasis.

On Sunday morning the visiting churchmen preached in local Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches. A lively discussion on world order took place in a city-wide youth rally in the afternoon. The program closed with an evening meeting for summary and dedication.

The success of the institute is due in large measure to the planning and promotion of Ralph Abele, Richard Budlong, and John J. Kessler of the joint committee on arrangements.

NEW RESOURCES ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The Bible and Human Rights, by Kathleen W. McArthur, Woman's Press, 60 cents. A guide for individual or group study, relating the present movement "to secure these rights" to the biblical and historical Christian heritage.

The Christian Citizen and Civil Rights, by Dorothy I. Height and J. Oscar Lee, Department of Race Relations, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 5 cents. A guide to study and action, showing what church groups can do to interpret and implement the Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights.

To Secure these Rights in Your Community, American Council on Race Relations, 4901 Ellis Ave., Chicago 15, Illinois, 50 cents. A sixty-page manual for discussion, fact-finding and action, in relation to employment, housing, education, health, welfare, transportation, law enforcement, etc.

Write to Galen R. Weaver, A. M. A. Race Relations Department, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., for samples of two inexpensive publications on Fair Employment Practices Legislation: (1) planned for church members, has a brief text accompanied by cartoons: (2) for employers, containing testimony by employers favoring FEP legislation. These may be ordered in lots of one hundred, at $2.50 and $2.00 per hundred respectively.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Requests for regular mailings or additional copies for Congregational Christians should be addressed to Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.